

4. Isolated houses are safer from strokes of lightning when properly protected by lightning rods. The great difficulty is to tell what is a proper protection from lightning.

5. So far as concerns fire due to lightning, the stone house and the slate roof are far preferable to the wooden house and the shingle roof. Metal roofs and rain spouts may be still better. The country proverbs as to the lightning singling out certain kinds of trees are based upon an insufficient number of observations. All available statistics that have been gathered show that no one kind of tree has a greater immunity than any other. When a lightning flash passes from the cloud to the earth, the conductivity of the soil and the strata below it have decided in general where the flash will strike. The characteristics of the soil and its water contents also decide what trees will best grow there. The difference in conductivity of various kinds of wood is not so important as the height and size of the tree, and the prominence of its location and the wetting of its trunk by rain.

6. The northern lights frequently appear in advance of a storm, but still more frequently after it, and have no real value in forecasting the occurrence of storms.

THE BAGUIOS OF THE PHILIPPINES.

In the translation of an article by Dr. Bergholz, which was published on page 402 of the September REVIEW, we have used the words "hurricane" and "typhoon" as synonymous, but strict adherence to the rules that the Editor has often defended would require that we either use the word "cyclone" uniformly for all revolving storms, or else use the names that have a widespread local usage. It is generally recognized that the word "hurricane" should, at least in English works, be restricted to the violent storms of the Atlantic, as it has its root in the Carib word "ourgan," from which the French have derived their "ouragan," the Germans their "orkan," and the Spanish their "huracan." The word "typhoon" has for unknown ages been applied to the revolving storms of the Indian Ocean and the China Sea.

The famous work by Algué, *Baguios ó Cyclones Filipinos*, brings to our attention the name that is universally applied in the Philippine Archipelago to the storms that, after they pass westward over the Archipelago, become typhoons on the coast of China. As to the origin and pronunciation of this word, Prof. Dean C. Worcester, the well-known authority of the Philippine Islands, writes as follows:

I can not tell you to what dialect the word "baguio" belongs. It is certainly the word used for typhoon by both the Tagalogs and the Viscayans, and I fancy it is of Malay origin, but that is a guess pure and simple.

As to the pronunciation, the "a" is as in barn; the "gui" is precisely equivalent to the "gi" in the "git" of our New England dialect; and the "o" is as in our "oh." The accent falls on the first syllable.

THE BEN NEVIS OBSERVATORY.

We condense the following items from an article in a recent St. Louis newspaper. Ben Nevis is located about 60 miles north-northwest of Glasgow, Scotland, and its altitude is given as 4,133 feet. For many years past two stations have been maintained, one at the summit, the other near the base, under the auspices of the Scottish Meteorological Society, which has secured the necessary voluntary contributions and an annual allowance from the government funds, as administered by the British Association for the Advancement of Science. During the first year of its existence the observations were made daily by Mr. Clement Wragge, now the Director of the Meteorological System of Queensland, Australia. In his day there was no residence for the observer at the sum-

mit, and he made a daily trip from the lower station to the upper and return on foot. At the present time a movement is being started to have the Ben Nevis observatories accepted as a government institution. Their usefulness for the scientific study of meteorological problems is universally recognized, but the value of the records from the upper station for use in weather forecasting are still to be demonstrated. It is one of the few localities where hourly observations are made simultaneously at both a high and a low station in order to deduce the average density of the intermediate air.

The summit of the mountain is always wreathed in snow, and perpetual fog overhangs the observatory. When the observer starts out for his first observation he takes with him an empty rain gage; this is changed for the one that has been out during the previous hour, which is covered up and taken back to the observatory. Having climbed by a ladder to the roof of the observatory, the observer faces the wind as squarely as possible, after which he records its apparent direction and velocity for comparison with the records of the self register. The quantity, kind, and direction of the clouds on all sides are then recorded, as also the presence and extent of the mist or fog. If the mist is absent, the observer may have an inspiring view of Scottish scenery. After returning to a lower story of the observatory tower, he, by means of John Aitken's dust counter, records exactly the number of dust particles in a cubic centimeter of air; he then descends to the office and measures the rain or melted snow. The observations are all recorded on slips of paper and afterwards copied on the daily sheets which contain the twenty-four hourly observations. In the winter time the thermometer screens, the rain gage, and other apparatus have to be kept clean of drifted snow, or dug out of the snow drifts, and often taken to the house to be thawed out, in which latter case a new set of thermometers is temporarily set up in the shelter.

THE SEVENTH INTERNATIONAL GEOGRAPHICAL CONGRESS.

This Congress sat in Berlin from September 28 to October 4, and was preceded and followed by a series of geographical excursions to different parts of Europe. Among the resolutions adopted by it are the following, which have a special interest for meteorologists, (see *Nature*, October 26, 1899, p. 633):

2. The Congress believes that the plans for international cooperation in Antarctic exploration form an excellent basis for joint research in physical geography, geology, geodesy, and biology. With regard to meteorological and magnetic work, however, it appoints an international committee to determine the general scheme and methods to be employed on the expeditions, and to endeavor to organize a system of simultaneous observations in the regions surrounding, but exterior to, the Antarctic.

3. The Congress expresses the earnest desire that all maps, including those published in countries using English and Russian measures, should, in addition to the graphic scale, bear the proportion of lengths on the map to those in nature in the usual form 1:2.

6. The Congress expresses the hope that in scientific publications the centigrade thermometer scale will, as far as possible, be employed; or, at least, the values in centigrade degrees be added to those expressed on the scales of Fahrenheit or Réaumur.

10. The Congress considers the collection of data as to the distribution of floating ice to be very important, and appeals to the hydrographic and meteorological institutes of the countries whose ships frequent high latitudes to induce the masters of vessels to keep a regular record of the occurrence of drifting ice. The Congress believes that the Danish Meteorological Institute in Copenhagen is the best adapted as an international center for collecting the records.

11. The Congress nominates an international committee to consider the nomenclature of the floor of the ocean, and to produce and publish at latest in time for the next Congress a chart of the ocean with revised nomenclature.

12. The Congress hopes that the names of oceanic islands, especially in the Pacific, will be revised with a view to ascertaining and preserving the native names. Where no native names exist or can be ascer-